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October 2009
VOLUME 66  NUMBER 4

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14 He Wanted To Be a Cowboy
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TEXAS CO-OP POWER is published by your electric cooperative to enhance the quality of life of its member-customers in an educational and entertaining format.

Cover Photo by Kent Barker
PARADISE FOUND

My wife and I recently spent part of a day ramming around Booked Up in Archer City, Larry McMurry’s bookstore.

The 200,000-volume bookstore south of Wichita Falls would have been one of those best-kept secrets without Jeff Tietz’s article (“A Bookish Paradise,” August 2009 issue). The soft-spoken manager, a persistent purring black and white resident cat that welcomed us, an immediately recognizable musty smell of old books, row after row of really old and not so old one-of-a-kind books of all sorts, sizes and shapes was a unique and memorable event.

Including our Dairy Queen lunch where one of the local pearl-buttoned cowboys showed my wife how spurs are fastened to cowboy boots, this day will be one of those moments never to be forgotten.

MIKE AND DEANNE SILVERSTEIN
Farmers Electric Cooperative

COUPON WEBSITES SAVE DOLLARS

In your August 2009 Recipe section (“Have a Plan Before You Go to the Store”), you gave information about cost-saving tips while grocery shopping. I have been clipping coupons for the past year using two websites that basically did all the pricing work for me. One site is www.thegrocerygame.com. There is a nominal charge for this site. The other is www.couponmom.com, a free site. These sites do all the homework for you, so no notebook or research is needed.

Just buy the Sunday paper and keep the coupon booklets in a folder, as sales are cyclical. Each website references the Sunday date of the coupon and from which flier it can be clipped. For products not listed with coupons, say meats and produce, the websites list all those items on sale that week and the percentage savings on those items. You’ll also discover there are some weeks when items with coupons are actually free!

GINGER HELSHA
Houston

REFERENCES

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

When working, I like old, soft, worn-out ones and camouflagged colored for hunting and sharp-colored ones for dressing up. And add hunting face mask, trail marker, animal tag and fashion accessory (other than Western wear) to Canion’s list of uses.

Thank you for reminding folks of another simple thing that seems to be falling by the wayside. I can’t leave home without one!

JUDY BISHOP JUREK
Wharton County Electric Cooperative

MAGGIE ADELINE
(Emerson) Hayes had the influenza as she called it, when she was 14, which would have been in 1918. When Maggie Adeline Emerson had the influenza at 14, she was so ill that her parents took her to the hospital in Ada, Oklahoma. Maggie saw funerals every day from her room, but she remembered one day in particular when she watched six funeral processions go by in the same day. Thankfully she recovered but came home to find that two of her friends had died.

Thank you for helping me to make a family connection to “The Forgotten Pandemic.”

JAN GREENLEE HAYES
South Plains Electric Cooperative

The lesson here is that the same critical result could apply to the H1N1 virus (swine flu). However, the world is much smaller today, and interaction between people around the world heightens the prospect of international exposure and the potential of a mutation may be greater than that of the 1918 virus.

RAMON C. NOCHES
Austin

The article about “The Forgotten Pandemic” in the August 2009 issue reminded me of a story I heard my grandmother tell. She was born in 1904 and had “the influenza” as she called it, when she was 14, which would have been in 1918.

When Maggie Adeline (Hayes) Emerson had the influenza at 14, she was so ill that her parents took her to the hospital in Ada, Oklahoma. Maggie saw funerals every day from her room, but she remembered one day in particular when she watched six funeral processions go by in the same day. Thankfully she recovered but came home to find that two of her friends had died.

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RAMON C. NOCHES
Austin
Shiver me timbers, it’s treasure-hunting time at **PIRATE DAYS OF THE COLONY**, a swashbuckling adventure for buccaneers of all ages. Set for October 17-18, this festival is born of a fanciful fable: Modern-day pirates in Galveston found a treasure chest full of gold buried by legendary pirate Jean Lafitte. But the disoriented pirates, with their map turned upside down, got lost and went north—way north, above Dallas—winding up in The Colony on the southeastern shore of Lake Lewisville.

As far-fetched as that tale is, there is real treasure to be found here, starting with the festival’s high-tech scavenger hunt in which wannabe pirates equipped with GPS devices search for hidden souvenirs. Meanwhile, there’s enough entertainment to keep anyone from walking the plank: Actors re-enact pirate history, dogs and humans compete in pirate costume contests, and in pirate school, children learn to walk and talk like a pirate. Yarr! For more information, call (972) 625-8027 or go to www.piratedays.org.

**BALL AND SPANISH MOSS ARE HARMLESS HITCHHIKERS**

“The propensity for both of these bromeliads to thrive on the dead or dying branches of living trees gives the mistaken impression that they are responsible for the tree’s demise. Actually, naturally dying branches simply provide good habitat for the bromeliads, because they are bare and generally offer the best conditions of light and relative humidity.”


**DIAMONDS ARE A GRID’S BEST FRIEND**

Apollo Diamonds is growing diamonds synthetically for future use in computer chips, other small electronics and—ta-da—the electric grid.

We learned something about it on the June 30 installment of PBS’ “Nova Science Now.”

The diamond is an excellent insulator of electricity. And blue diamonds could serve as conductors because they contain the chemical element boron. A cubic centimeter of diamond could withstand 10 million volts of electricity. Electric grids using diamonds could speed power across lines and with much less hardware than the current copper-based systems.

**FUTURE TALK**

As detailed in the book *Great River: The Rio Grande in North American History* (1984, Texas Monthly Press), the Rio Grande has had many imaginative names throughout the history of mapmaking. Early Spanish explorers gave it many, including: Rio de la Concepción, Rio de las Palmas (River of the Palms), Rio de Nuestra Señora (River of Our Lady), Rio de San Buenaventura del Norte (River of Good Fortune of the North) and Rio Guadalquivir (Great River).
I

f you’re interested in solar energy, you might find that solar water heating is the simplest and most cost-effective way to put this renewable resource to work. New solar industry standards promote quality products and installations, and new federal solar tax credits can take 30 percent off the installed cost of solar water heating for your home or business.

A solar water heater, which harnesses sunlight to produce hot water, features a solar energy collector and a storage tank. It is designed with a dark, heat-absorbing material inside the collector—typically a glazed box or tube. A heat-exchange fluid passes through the collector, gets hot and then runs through a heat exchanger, which transfers the heat to the water in a storage tank.

In the United States, a typical solar water heating system is likely to meet more than half of a household’s water heating needs over the course of a year.

Don’t confuse solar water heating with solar electric systems, also known as high-tech photovoltaics, which use a semiconducting material to convert sunlight into electricity. By comparison, solar water heating is low-tech. It puts the radiant heat energy of the sun directly to work, heating water for household or commercial use.

For best results, solar panels should face south and should be unshaded year-round and for years to come. Some people forget how quickly trees will grow or how long the shadow of an evergreen tree can be.

WHICH DESIGN IS THE BEST FOR YOU?
Closed-loop antifreeze systems use an antifreeze heat transfer fluid in the collector as freeze protection under harsh winter conditions. A circulating pump, powered by household electricity or by a small photovoltaics panel, moves the fluid through the system. A heat exchanger transfers heat from the fluid to household water. In four-season climates, this is the most popular generic design.

Closed-loop drain-back systems use distilled water with a corrosion inhibitor as the heat transfer fluid that circulates through the collector. Like the antifreeze system, this system also uses a heat exchanger, so the fluid does not mix with household water.

Open-loop direct systems heat and circulate household (potable) water directly through solar energy collectors. One type of open-loop system is a batch heater—simply a tank filled with water and placed on the roof either in a glazed box or attached to a solar collector panel. This type of heater has few parts and is generally reliable. However, it must be protected from freezing or drained for the winter. The design is common for do-it-yourself projects that serve summer homes or workshops.

SHOPPING TIPS
Your electric cooperative is one source of information about qualified solar equipment dealers. Other sources include the Solar Energy Industries Association (www.seia.org), the State Energy Conservation Office (www.seco.cpa.state.tx.us) or the American Solar Energy Society (www.findsolar.com).

Recently, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s Energy Star program (www.energystar.gov) began to label solar water heating equipment and other energy-efficient water heaters.

FIRST COST, INCENTIVES AND SAVINGS
Before incentives, installed costs for a two-panel household solar water heating system typically run between $5,000 and $9,000, depending on the level of freeze protection and other features. Whatever the cost of the installed system, you may be eligible for a 30 percent cost reduction, thanks to the federal tax credit on solar, which now applies to the installed cost (within guidelines) of the system. Check the Database of State Incentives for Renewables and Efficiency (www.dsireusa.org) to see if you qualify.

Jill K. Cliburn has written several reports for the Cooperative Research Network, a service of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.
WOMEN’S HEALTHY SKIN UPDATE

Erase Wrinkles Instantly

Reduce the appearance of fine line and wrinkles INSTANTLY with the tool that top makeup artists use to get leading ladies ready for their high-definition close-ups!

Try it FREE for 30 DAYS! Read below to find out how...

High-Definition is great for television but it scares the daylights out of actresses over 35. Fear of the unforgiving lens has them screaming behind the scenes, “Make me look younger.” As one of the leading makeup artists in show business, Rachel has to deal with the panic and anxiety among older actresses who must face a high-definition camera. She’s become an expert in performing minor miracles. Some transformations can take hours, but when everything depends on Rachel’s ability to work fast, she reaches for a secret weapon in the bottom drawer.

Rachel has found that the fastest way to minimize the visible appearance of wrinkles—even the most stubborn ones—is with Hydroxatone® Instant Wrinkle Filler. That’s why it goes with her on every job and never fails when called on to help leading ladies get ready for their close-up... even in high-definition.

Women Are Raving
That It Really Works

But it’s not only Rachel who believes in the magic of Hydroxatone® Instant Wrinkle Filler. In all of the years of market testing, we’ve never had a product test so high. But seeing is believing! Once the women who participated in the test saw how amazing they looked they didn’t want to give back their trial supply.

Developed by a Surgeon

Endorsed by one of the country’s top plastic surgeons, and previously available only through plastic surgeon’s offices, Hydroxatone® Instant Wrinkle Filler is available for the very first time in small quantities to the public. Finally, the same smoothing power that makes women look younger in front of the camera can do the same for you in your own bathroom mirror!

Immediately Visible Results

You don’t need to wait long to look younger. The silicone micro beads in Hydroxatone® Instant Wrinkle Filler trigger an immediate and significant optical wrinkle elimination. The super-hydrating ingredient, Hyaluronic Acid, rapidly plumps up lines from the inside. Just smooth the filler into your laugh lines, crow’s feet or even depressed scars for instant results. The results look amazing, even in close-up situations.

Additionally, the breakthrough ingredients in Hydroxatone® Instant Wrinkle Filler help reverse the signs of premature aging of the skin, while helping to minimize the damaging effects of stress and the environment.

It’s a Safe and Painless
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With a simple topical application of Hydroxatone® Instant Wrinkle Filler, you can see instant results in the fight against unsightly deep lines and wrinkles. What’s more, Hydroxatone® can be applied to all areas of the face, neck, and body—not just to “crow’s feet” around the eyes.

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PICK of the CROP

The pecans rain down at Sorrells Farms, where there’s a whole lot of shakin’ going on.

BY ELLEN SWEETS • PHOTOS BY KENT BARKER
Kinley Sorrells, above, and his son tend 1,200 acres of pecan trees, 48 trees per acre.
Gayland Sorrells climbs aboard a big, oddly shaped yellow machine and pushes a button. The machine rumbles to life, its front attachment looking more like the pinchers of a gigantic, angular beetle than an invaluable piece of pecan-picking equipment. This machine is, in fact, a significant part of harvesting the Lone Star State’s favorite nut, a product that Gayland and his father, Kinley Sorrells, have been tending for three decades.

“Go ‘head,” Kinley Sorrells says, urging his son to continue the starting-up process. “Fire her up.”

With the push of another button, hydraulic action forces the pinchers to separate. With the press of yet another button, they come together, the better to clamp on to a tree trunk and shake the living daylights out of it. Ripe pecans rain down. California-based Orchard Machinery Corporation claims to be the only company in the country that makes the Shock Wave Mono Boom, a wickedly efficient piece of equipment that helps the Sorrells harvest their crop. After a vacuum fan blows out the trash, such as leaves and twigs, the pecans are carried by conveyor belt into a harvesting trailer and then hauled to a cleaning plant. Pecans consist of about 25 percent moisture when they’re shaken from trees; ideally, that number should drop to 4 percent during the drying process.

With a growing season that lasts from six to seven months and an average annual rainfall of 30 inches, Comanche County farmers produce a variety of agricultural products, including pecan, grain, hay, watermelon, cantaloupe and peanut crops. In 2008, the sales of dairy cattle and their milk, beef cattle, sheep and goats accounted for $143 million total cash receipts for agricultural commodities, with crops accounting for the remainder. Pecans, which typically produce about $5 million in annual sales, generated $2.7 million in a down year in 2008.

Sorrells Farms is one of the county’s farms that contributes a variety of agricultural products. Thirty miles southwest of Stephenville and five miles east of Comanche, just a quarter-mile past the point where blacktop gives way to a well-traveled dirt road, the farm is home to a 30-year-old family business that also includes cattle, hay, watermelons, cantaloupes, squash, zucchini, jalapeños, onions, peaches and tomatoes.

But it’s pecans where the farm really makes its mark, and patriarch Kinley Sorrells has been watering, feeding, harvesting and selling them since completing undergraduate and graduate studies in agricultural education and soil science at Tarleton State University in Stephenville. Gayland followed in his father’s tracks with a degree in agricultural economics.

Together, father and son tend their 1,200 acres. With 48 trees per acre, it is an exercise in continual vigilance. During the growing season, from April through October, the trees require one to two inches of water per week from rain and/or irrigation. One acre-inch of water, which would cover an acre of ground an inch deep, equals 27,154 gallons.
Packaged Treats Round Out Business

Martha and Larry Newkirk of San Saba have certainly got the right idea about incorporating pecans into luscious edibles. From their 340-acre spread of 7,000 trees at The Great San Saba River Pecan Company, they sell preserves that include pecans grown on their farm on the San Saba River. The 10 flavors include jalapeño peach and pecan; cherry pecan; and their award-winning peach, pecan and amaretto—not to mention a knockout pecan pie. Sip a complimentary cup of pecan coffee while you shop.

The Newkirks are among a handful of growers who allow you to pick your own pecans. Martha Newkirk stores the long-cane “thrashing sticks” used to whack branches. No word on whether a protective helmet is needed.

“Kids love it, and harvesting pecans makes a nice family outing,” she says. “You can bring a picnic basket and sit by the river after beating the trees. It’s one way to work up an appetite.”

When the Sorrells aren’t irrigating, praying for rain to start or praying for it to stop (which hasn’t happened lately), they’re on the lookout for raccoons, deer, opossums and, of course, squirrels that can make short work of a crop if not strongly discouraged. Here and there are massive ruts where wild pigs rooting up the ground in search of food have made their presence known.

“When we’re not getting after the wild pigs, we’re on the lookout for the other pests—bugs and disease,” Kinley Sorrells says as he navigates corridors of trees in his dusty four-wheel-drive Ford pickup. In addition to guarding against such diseases as pecan scab, stem end blight, fungal leaf spot and powdery mildew, farmers must also look out for aphids, stink bugs and the dreaded pecan nut casebearer, a moth whose larvae tunnel into pecan nuts.

“You really have to look out for casebearers,” Sorrells says. “They grow into moths and can really do you in. The adults come up out of the ground, get into the trees and deposit eggs on the tip of the nuts. They know just when the tree is pollinated. That’s when they hatch. Larvae burrow into the young fruit. They can destroy a whole cluster, so we have to spray at just the right time.”

The right time to spray pesticides, Sorrells says, is when casebearers start arriving on the scene and are hared into pheromone traps. The traps contain the female moth’s pheromone—the chemical she releases to attract the male moth—and snag the moths with a sticky, glue-like substance on the bottom. Coordinating spraying with the use of the traps lowers the use and cost of pesticides, he says.

Under Environmental Protection Agency regulations, pesticide sprays used in pecan orchards must pass registration requirement testing—for example, no pesticide residue may be found in pecan kernels—before they can be sold in the United States. As he crisscrosses his orchard in his dusty pickup, Sorrells stops in a stand of trees, picking a pecan and slicing away a horizontal cross section to demonstrate the maturation process that will in time yield a fully formed pecan. The varieties that he grows include Cheyenne, Kiowa, Wichita, Pawnee, Mahan, Cape Fear and Karanu.

“Pecan growing has had its ups and downs what with the fluctuating price of pecans, but things had been on an upswing until the economy tanked this year; then we had the same problems everybody else had,” he says. “The problem we’re facing this year, actually the past two years, has been the increase in fuel costs, and it hit us hard. Chemicals and fertilizers are tied to oil as well, so we’ve had increased costs.”

Pecans grow wild only in the United States and Mexico. Here in Texas, where pecans are grown in roughly 200 counties from the Panhandle to the Rio Grande Valley, the nuts are the state’s most important native horticultural crop, according to John Begnaud, a retired extension horticulture specialist with Texas A&M University’s AgriLife Extension Service.

The United States and Mexico remain the world’s largest exporters of pecans, with Texas ranking second only to Georgia in U.S. production. Sorrells sells locally, statewide, nationally and internationally, with mainland China, Hong Kong and Mexico as customers. Pecans as a cash crop have spread to 30 countries as far away as Australia, China, India, Israel and South Africa.

Because pecans are such a viable crop, there are active breeding programs to improve pest resistance, prevent disease and encourage early maturation to accommodate various growing zones. The U.S. Department of Agriculture, through the Agricultural Research Service, oversees a high-profile pecan genetics and breeding program in College Station.

Despite their broad appeal, many in this country still think of pecans and pecan products as a seasonal treat for Thanksgiving or Christmas. Fortunately, we Texans know better.

For more information about Sorrells Farms, which is served by Comanche Electric Cooperative, call (254) 879-4677, go to www.sorrellsfarms.com or e-mail giftnuts@sorrellsfarms.com.

Ellen Sweets, who wrote about Austin chef Hoover Alexander in the March issue of Texas Co-op Power, is a former food and feature writer for The Denver Post.
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Elmer Kelton at J. Frank Dobie's Paisano Ranch by Bill Wittliff

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Kelton’s father, Buck Kelton, was the foreman of the McElroy Ranch, a 230-square-mile spread overlapping Upton and Crane counties in West Texas. When it came to cowboying, Buck sometimes said his son was “as slow as the seven-year itch.”

“That gave me an inferiority complex, for sure,” Kelton said. “I was always out there trying, with the cowboys who were so adept at what they did, and my younger brothers coming along—they were all better hands than me. I always felt a little out of place wherever I was. When I was with the cowboys I wasn’t at their level, and in town I was regarded as a cowboy, not a town boy.”

Soon after he discovered he was nearsighted, tuberculosis confined Kelton to bed for almost a year. He’d always been a “bookish kid”—“Very often I beat the girls at spelling bees,” he said—but while ill, his bookishness flourished.

“That inferiority complex pushed me further toward the creative work,” he says. He read and drew and made up stories and sketched mock-ups of newspapers on notebook paper, crafting news columns and headlines about ranch affairs.

Kelton lives with his wife, Ann, an Austrian whom he met in Ebensee, Austria, while serving in World War II in the U.S. Army, in a brick, ranch-style home on a quiet street near the groomed campus of Angelo State University. They have supplied their thick-carpeted living room with prints of Western scenes, bronze statuettes of cowboys on horseback and porcelain Austrian villagers in holiday costume.

“IT’s like a museum,” Kelton said, “and we’re gettin’ to be museum pieces.”

Elmer Kelton is 83 and quiet-looking. He is neither tall nor wide. He wears glasses with large, round lenses and favors plain, snap-button shirts. His conversation is relaxed.

Kelton has almost finished his 51st novel, Other Men’s Horses, which is scheduled for publication this fall. Several of his books, including the novels The Time It Never Rained and The Day the Cowboys Quit, are considered classics of the genre and notable works in American fiction.

Kelton has won just about every Western writing award there is, including seven Spur Awards from the Western Writers of America, which in 1995 named him the greatest Western author of all time. The annual Spur Award represents the finest in literature about the American West. Four of Kelton’s books have won the Western Heritage Award from the National Cowboy Hall of Fame.

In his life and work, Kelton has stayed close to his original vision of himself, to the particular cowboy lifestyle into which he was born but not fully bred. He left Crane County to get a journalism degree at the University of Texas at Austin. He wanted to be a cowboy. But instead, Elmer Kelton saddled up for a legendary ride in the literary saddle.
Texas, then returned to ranch country as a farm and livestock reporter for the San Angelo Standard-Times—a professional observer of his past. He left the Standard-Times after 10 years to edit Sheep and Goat Raisers’ Magazine and then became associate editor of the Livestock Weekly. Until he retired from that publication in 1990, he was a moon-lighting novelist, fictionalizing much of what he reported.

“Do you know there’s someone out there with your name writing Westerns?” a subject once asked him.

Kelton has written many pulp westerns—he got his start in college in the 1950s, composing stories like “His Gun Was the Law” and “Blind Canyon” for magazines like Ranch Romances and Thrilling Western—but he has steadily moved away from formulaic writing toward literary work.

“I feel that progression, I sense it when I look at all my books,” he says.

Kelton’s best novels are minutely naturalistic, sparsely plotted and meticulously sociological—devotional portraits of ranch life in West Texas. In them, he attends to the sensory effect of machinery (“The steel windmill pumped a small gush of water into the concrete tank with each clanking stroke of the sucker-rod”), conjures the hellishness of unending weather dependency, and reconstructs racial and economic hierarchies. His readers watch, at sheep-shearing time, as fleeces “fold away from the animal’s body and expose the bright cream color of the inner wool”; they see how raindrops striking desiccated soil fail to soak in, but instead “swirl and run away, following the contours of the land, seeking out the draws and swales”; and they learn that a rancher low on feed will burn the spines off prickly pear cactus by making “a slow, gentle pass with the flame,” allowing the thorn “to burn back to a stub without the pear itself having time to singe.”

Representations of ranch life are everywhere in Kelton’s home. The mantelpiece shelf is taken up by five bronze cowboys on horseback, a bronze cowboy holding a coiled lariat, and a bronze cowboy holding a saddle. These are awards from the National Cowboy Hall of Fame, the National Cowboy Symposium and the Western Writers of America. Yet another mounted cowboy statuette sits on a columnar coffee table that functions as its plinth. On its base, a nameplate reads:

“Keepers of the Heritage
with Elmer Kelton
I was surprised to learn that the sculpted cowboy on the horse was Kelton himself.

Kelton would never confer the term “real working cowboy” on himself, but for two summers he was. Buck Kelton had his own cattle operation, the Lea Ranch, on 20 square miles of leased land adjacent to the McElroy Ranch. After Elmer’s junior and senior years in high school, Buck asked him to manage it. Kelton was the only full-time hand; his three younger brothers took turns coming out to help.

The work was simple. Kelton rose at dawn and fixed biscuits and coffee. He brought in the work horses and saddled his favorite. He rode the length and width of the ranch, inspecting fencelines and windmills, checking cattle for screwworm and painting disinfectant where he found blowfly bites. If a fence was broken, he’d get tools and wire from the house and bring them back in a wagon; if a windmill was broken he’d get the McElroy’s windmiller, Cliff Newland. He was on a horse all day. Without trying, he memorized the landscape.

For dinner, Kelton and his brothers ate canned red beans and fried steak—beef from their father’s herd. For variety, they trapped and roasted quail. They swam in the ranch’s stock tanks, raced horses and shot jackrabbits for practice. On a hand-crank phonograph, they played Bob Wills, Gene Autry and the Sons of the Pioneers. By the light of a kerosene lamp, Elmer Kelton read The Ox-Bow Incident and Tombstone.

What chiefly occupied Kelton’s mind those summers were the weather, the wildlife and the progress of the seasons. “They were probably the freest times I ever had,” he said. “I’d have been content to stay out there forever.”

Jeff Tietz, who is based in Austin, wrote about the Quebe Sisters Band in Texas Co-op Power’s June 2009 issue.
“It’s a storage shed, workshop and game room – all in one.”

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We need your help. Congress is considering climate-change legislation that could significantly increase your monthly electric bill if not done right. As electricity prices go up, it impacts the cost of nearly everything—including your household budget.

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This legislation creates new government policy for energy use and production. It charges you for the greenhouse gases emitted when electricity is produced.

Some want to force consumers to pay more than their fair share because of where they live—that’s unfair! We can make sure climate-change goals are achievable and affordable, protecting you from electric price shock, if our elected officials work with us.

Our Senators need to fight for a bill that is:

- **FAIR**—Climate-change legislation needs to recognize regional differences in how electricity is produced. You should not be penalized because of where you live.
- **AFFORDABLE**—Any climate-change plan must keep electric bills affordable for all Americans.
- **ACHIEVABLE**—Climate-change mandates must be realistic to ensure long-term success.

Please take a moment right now to sign and return the two attached postcards. They will be hand delivered directly to each of your U.S. Senators. This is our grassroots effort to make your voices heard in the halls of Congress.

Our job at the electric cooperatives in Texas is to keep your electric bills affordable. Please help by sending these postcards today. Thank you very much.
We have had the Sleep Number bed for a few years now and can say it is the very best investment we have ever made. Back pain was a fact of life for me for years. After sleeping on the Sleep Number bed, I have improved significantly. It is amazing to go to bed in pain and wake up refreshed and pain free.

Janet D., Mt. Vernon, WA

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Best of all, each side of the SLEEP NUMBER® bed adjusts independently, making it the perfect bed for couples.

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For a limited time, inquire about our revolutionary bed and we’ll send you a special $50 Savings Card to use toward the purchase of any Sleep Number bed or accessory items of $100 or more.*
You have a trusted alternative to doing business with a large, publicly traded corporation as your electric company – you own a cooperative that provides power as close to cost as possible. October is National Cooperative Month, and I encourage you, our member-owners, to reflect with pride on your part in supporting CoServ Electric and other co-ops across our nation. As member-owned enterprises, co-ops are owned largely by the people who live and work in the communities they serve. That gives us a different perspective from businesses owned by distant investors.

Co-ops operate in virtually every industry, including agriculture, financial services, food retailing and distribution, housing, healthcare, telecommunications and, of course, energy. CoServ’s fellow U.S. co-ops range in size from small storefronts to large Fortune 500 companies, employing more than half a million Americans across our nation with revenues of more than an astounding $230 billion.

You’ve probably read or heard in the news about the possibility of the federal government offering loans and grants to help doctors, hospitals, and businesses nonprofit cooperative networks to provide low-cost healthcare and coverage, but the principles of co-ops run much deeper than simply providing a low-priced product or service. Co-ops also have a strong commitment to the communities in which their members live and work. Every day, in every sector, through cash contributions and volunteerism, co-ops support local causes ranging from education to the environment. At a time of increasing concern about the national economy, co-ops are creating jobs, income and opportunity in their communities every day. October is the month set aside to recognize the special nature and accomplishments of cooperative business.

This year, observances are focusing specifically on co-ops’ commitments to their communities. Of course, investor-owned businesses generate jobs and make charitable contributions. But for co-ops, it’s more personal. It’s a critical part of where we work, what we do and why we do it. In our own community, our CoServ Charitable Foundation has awarded grants to support 130 projects for 94 organizations in 34 communities - reaching our milestone $2 million mark this year. The foundation receives much of its funding through the support of CoServ’s members, customers and employees. Your pennies create jobs, reduce crime, curb hunger, further education, improve healthcare, provide basic living needs, and offer hope to families. At CoServ, we believe in giving back to the communities in which we work, and it’s not just lip service – our concern for our community is one of the founding principles of the electric cooperative business model today.

Recently, your donations have supported various nonprofits in your service area by:
- Providing Bridges Outreach of Denton County, Inc. bus transportation and field trip expenses for their summer academic program
- Supporting Collin County’s Committee on Aging’s Meals on Wheels program
- Purchasing audio/visual equipment for Highland Village Fire Department’s Emergency Operations Center

Community is not just where we work; it’s why we work. At CoServ, we are motivated to serve you, our member-owners. Doing that means we must also serve the communities in which our members live, work and play.
WHAT ARE CO-OPS?

- Cooperatives are owned by their members—the people who receive services from them—and are found in many industries. For example, more than 900 electric co-ops serve 42 million Americans. According to the National Cooperative Grocers Association, 30 percent of farmers’ products are marketed through more than 3,000 farmer-owned cooperatives in America.
- Familiar brands like SunKist, Land O’ Lakes, Cabot Creamery, Ocean Spray, and Sun-Maid are all co-ops formed to help farmers distribute products.
- In the financial services arena, 10,000 credit unions provide their assistance to 84 million members across the nation.
- Co-ops have also been formed to provide child care, insurance, and housing. Nearly 30,000 cooperatives operate at 73,000 locations nationally.

OCTOBER IS NATIONAL CO-OP MONTH

YOU LIKE US. YOU TRUST US. WE THANK YOU.

Fund Your Student’s Future – W. Tip Hall, Jr. Scholarship

In 2010, CoServ Electric will provide five $2,500 scholarships to seniors in our service area. Please encourage your high school senior to visit the CoServ Web site (coserv.com) to review the operating guidelines, the scholarship application (with video option) and the application checklist. It is important to follow all instructions. Additionally, it is crucial to submit completed applications with all required reference materials mentioned in the checklist.

To download the necessary resources, visit coserv.com>Community>Academic Initiatives>Scholarships.

If your student doesn’t have Internet access and would like to request an application to be mailed to your home, please contact Tracee Elrod at (940) 321-7809 or e-mail your request to telrod@coserv.com.

All required materials and the completed application must be postmarked no later than Jan. 29, 2010 and mailed to:

CoServ Electric
ATTN: Tracee Elrod
7701 South Stemmons Corrith, Texas 75210-1842

For information about how your student could win an all-expense-paid trip to Washington, DC, with our Government-In-Action Youth Tour contest, check out our Web site under Community>Academic Initiatives.

Customer Satisfaction Scores (ISO-Certified)

For more information on rates visit coserv.com>Electric>Co-op Information>Membership Benefits>CoServ vs. the Competition.
Charity motorcycle event to benefit CASA

CoServ Charitable Foundation will host “Power of Hope Poker Run” on Oct. 10 in Corinth to benefit Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) of Denton County. CASA provides trained community volunteers that advocate for the best interests of abused and neglected children in the court system. This nonprofit also promotes community awareness about child abuse issues.

The 70-mile ride leaves from and ends at American Eagle Harley Davidson, 5920 S. I-35 E, Corinth, TX 76210. First bike out at 9 a.m. and last bike in by 12:30 p.m. Lunch will be provided. The ride is a poker run where participants travel over a route of three stops and, at each stop on the route, draw a playing card. The object is to have the best poker hand at the end of the run. The best three hands will compete in a final game to determine first, second and third place.

You can register the day of the event or to obtain a registration form, visit coserv.com > Community > CoServ Charitable Foundation. First 100 registered participants will receive a commemorative t-shirt. If you have any questions about the event, e-mail us at powerofhope@coserv.com.

Join us for a fun way to raise money for a meaningful cause!

“THANK YOU” to CoServ Charitable Foundation Supporters

Dear CoServ,

On behalf of the senior citizens we serve throughout Collin County, I want to thank the CoServ Charitable Foundation for your investment of $30,000 to our Meals on Wheels program to help cover the shortfall due to the current downturn in the economy so that we do not have to reduce the number of meals we serve. For over thirty years, Collin County Committee on Aging’s mission is to combat isolation and promote the health, dignity and independence of those 60 years or older through meals, education for their caregivers, and a transit system for all citizens.

You have assured that your investment is helping to send the message to senior citizens that someone does care about them. Together we are making a long-term positive impact on their lives. We truly appreciate your assistance.

Again, thank you so much for investing in the senior citizens of Collin County and helping make an extraordinary difference in their lives.

Sincerely,

Jerry Sheffield
Senior Vice President
Development/Marketing
Collin County Committee on Aging

Looking out for your best interests

We know we answer to you. You own this cooperative and that’s why CoServ Electric looks out for your best interests. Every day, CoServ continues to earn your trust through delivering rates as close to cost as possible while providing you with reliable service. For the past four years, CoServ Electric’s rates have remained stable and competitive compared to other electric providers in our service area (see chart).

Along with ensuring that you enjoy low rates, CoServ also provides you with resources to identify and implement ways to conserve and lower your bill. Energy conservation is the key to keeping a handle on your usage. For more information, visit TOGETHER WE SAVE at coserv.com.
CoServ Gas – Texas Administrative Code

TITLE 16
ECONOMIC REGULATION
PART 1
RAILROAD COMMISSION OF TEXAS
CHAPTER 7
GAS SERVICES
DIVISION
SUBCHAPTER D
CUSTOMER SERVICE AND PROTECTION

RULE 7.460
SUSPENSION OF GAS UTILITY SERVICE DISCONNECTION DURING AN EXTREME WEATHER EMERGENCY

(a) Applicability and scope. This rule applies to gas utilities, as defined in Texas Utilities Code, §§101.0037(a) and 121.001, and to owners, operators, and managers of mobile home parks or apartment houses who purchase natural gas through a master meter for delivery to a dwelling unit in a mobile home park or apartment house, pursuant to Texas Utilities Code, §§124.001-124.002, within the jurisdiction of the Railroad Commission pursuant to Texas Utilities Code, §102.001. For purposes of this section, all such gas utilities and owners, operators and managers of master meter systems shall be referred to as “providers.” Providers shall comply with the following service standards. A gas distribution utility shall file amended service rules incorporating these standards with the Railroad Commission in the manner prescribed by law. (b) Disconnection prohibited. Except where there is a known dangerous condition or a use of natural gas service in a manner that is dangerous or unreasonably interferes with service to others, a provider shall not disconnect natural gas service to: (1) a delinquent residential customer during an extreme weather emergency. An extreme weather emergency means a day when the previous day’s highest temperature did not exceed 32 degrees Fahrenheit and the temperature is predicted to remain at or below that level for the next 24 hours according to the nearest National Weather Station for the county where the customer takes service. (2) a delinquent residential customer for a billing period in which the provider receives a written pledge, letter of intent, purchase order, or other written notification from an energy assistance provider that it is forwarding sufficient payment to continue service; or (3) a delinquent residential customer on a weekend day, unless personnel or agents of the provider are available for the purpose of receiving payment or making collections and reconnecting service. (c) Payment plans. Providers shall defer collection of the full payment of bills that are due during an extreme weather emergency until after the emergency is over, and shall work with customers to establish a payment schedule for deferred bills as set forth in paragraph (d) of §7.45 of this title, relating to Quality of Service. (d) Notice. Beginning in the September or October billing periods utilities and owners, operators, or managers of master metered systems shall give notice as follows: (1) Each utility shall provide a copy of this rule to the social services agencies that distribute funds from the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program within the utility’s service area. (2) Each utility shall provide a copy of this rule to any other social service agency of which the provider is aware that provides financial assistance to low income customers in the utility’s service area. (3) Each utility shall provide a copy of this rule to all residential customers of the utility and customers who are owners, operators, or managers of master metered systems. (4) Owners, operators, or managers of master metered systems shall provide a copy of this rule to all of their customers. (e) In addition to the minimum standards specified in this section, providers may adopt additional or alternative requirements if the provider files a tariff with the Commission pursuant to §7.44 of this title (relating to Filing of Tariffs). The Commission shall review the tariff to ensure that at least the minimum standards of this section are met. Source Note: The provisions of this §7.460 adopted to be effective May 12, 2002, 27 TexReg 3769.
Frisco Fire Safety Town will hold its third annual Fall Festival & Trick-or-Treat event on Oct. 23, once again giving kids lessons in fire safety along with a bag of goodies.

Come in costume to this free event, scheduled from 6 to 9 p.m., to visit with fire clowns and see real fire engines. As in previous years, children will be able to explore a safety house—complete with a realistic-looking living area, kitchen, bathroom and bedroom, from which they can practice fire escape training.

After a bit of face painting, get the family’s picture taken at the CoServ Gas Pumpkin Patch and, of course, everyone will be able to nosh on candy after a bit of trick-or-treating.

Jennifer Tramel, volunteer and special events coordinator for Frisco Fire Safety Town, notes that new fire and rescue elements have been added to the facility—but to find out what they are, you’ll have to attend!

More than 100,000 visitors have experienced Frisco Fire Safety Town since it opened in January 2007. The mission is simple: Teach children about safety in a fun and interactive environment. These education classes focus on a number of safety topics, each with the goal of preventing injuries and teaching students how to be safe. These programs operate year-round and are always free of charge.

Safety lessons start in an educational facility that includes classrooms, an interactive fire engine and the aforementioned safety house, where children learn about home hazards, severe weather, fire safety and more. The outdoor “town” resembles a miniature Frisco with buildings that represent real area businesses, all recreated on a smaller scale especially for children. Intermingled with the home and business buildings are paved and marked streets complete with working traffic signals, a railroad crossing and a toll booth.

Frisco Fire Safety Town, at 8601 Gary Burns Drive, is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. For more information about the Fall Festival, Frisco Fire Safety Town or to schedule a Safe and Sound Walk Around educational tour, visit www.friscofire.com or call (972) 292-6350. CoServ Gas is a proud founding sponsor of Frisco Fire Safety Town.
Dutch Oven Cooking Day coming to McKinney

Chestnut Square Historic Village in McKinney is hosting a Living History Day on Oct. 11 featuring Dutch oven cooking.

Folks are encouraged to head on out to see Dutch oven enthusiasts display (and more importantly serve) their very special cooking. Food tastes great cooked over a fire, and there will be plenty to sample.

The Living History Group, a troop of Collin County residents, regularly hosts Living History Days at the village and brings history to life in their period-appropriate costumes, re-enactments and demonstrations.

Want to try your own hand at this ol’ cowboy way of cooking? There are literally thousands of recipes you can attempt, but it’s hard to beat the comfort of hot chicken and dumplings on a cold fall evening. This recipe from “A Texas Treasury of Dutch Oven Cooking,” a compilation cookbook by the Lone Star Dutch Oven Society, was submitted by Todd and Sissay Sandidge of Bandera and requires a 14-inch oven. “This recipe is simple for the beginner and can be adjusted for any size oven,” say the Sandidges.

**OLD-FASHIONED CHICKEN AND DUMPLINGS**

14-16 skinned chicken thighs
Salt & pepper
Cooking oil
1-2 medium onions, sliced
Water
4-5 carrots, sliced
2-3 stalks celery, chopped
Spices

**Dumplings**

Salt and pepper chicken and cover bottom of oven with the cooking oil. Heat oil with 14-16 coals under oven; brown chicken and onions in heated oil. When browned, cover the chicken with water and bring to a light to medium boil by adding 6-8 coals to the bottom and one ring of coals on the lid. Cook for 1 to 1 1/2 hours or until chicken is tender. Then add carrots, celery and any desired spices. While this is cooking, start your dumplings.

**DUMPLINGS**

1 1/8 teaspoons yeast
1/4 cup warm water
1 tablespoon sugar
1 tablespoon baking powder
1/4 teaspoon baking soda
2 tablespoons melted shortening
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 cup buttermilk
3 cups flour

Dissolve yeast in warm water, then mix all ingredients together. Knead lightly. Make into 2-inch dough balls and flatten to 1/2-inch thick. Drop dumplings in oven. Keep at a low boil or simmer after dumplings are added. Cook for 20-30 minutes, or until dumplings are done. Add heat to top and bottom as needed. Serve.

For more information on Living History Days, call (972) 562-8790 or go to www.chestnutsquare.org.
An amazing cache of historic Indian Head Cents not minted for public circulation since 1909 are now being released from our vault at GovMint.com. They are being issued in 25-coin Banker’s Half Rolls, Full 50-coin Banker’s Rolls, and massive 100-coin Double Banker’s Rolls:

• All Banker’s Rolls will contain 5 coins dated from the 1800s and none later than 1909— GUARANTEED!
• Each 50-Coin Banker’s Roll will contain 10 coins dating from the 1800s PLUS a FREE early Civil War (1860s) Indian Cent— a $17 value — GUARANTEED!
• Each 100-Coin Double Banker’s Roll will contain at least TWENTY coins dated from the 1800s, a FREE Civil War-dated Indian Head Cent PLUS a historic U.S. “Large” Cent minted over 150 years ago — a $45 value — GUARANTEED!
• Each is an authentic collectible Numismatic coin with full date and graded in Good condition or better — GUARANTEED!

Precious Pieces of History
Long before the Lincoln Cent was introduced in 1909, before the electric light and the automobile, the Indian Head Cent was the coin of America’s pioneer era. These are the coins used by soldiers during the Civil War and prospectors exploring the Wild West. They witnessed General George Custer’s last stand at the Little Big Horn and the Wright Brothers first flight at Kitty Hawk. Today, Indian Head Cents are genuine pieces of history that you can hold in your hands — if you can find them! Rarely seen today except in private collections, most all were lost or melted down ages ago. Today in a single year the U.S. government makes THREE TIMES as many Lincoln Cents as ALL the Indian Head Cents made in their entire era of 1864-1909!

One of America’s Most Wanted Coins
One of the most popular U.S. coins ever struck, Indian Heads are prized for their design — actually Miss Liberty wearing a traditional Native American headdress. The other side of the coin features a Federal shield and a wreath of oak leaves.

Few Indian Head Cents Remain
Like the millions of bison that once thundered across the plains of America, few Indian Head cents survive today. At a time when 10¢ an hour was a standard working wage, a Cent still packed real buying power. But when the Lincoln Cent appeared in 1909, the Indian Head soon began to disappear and has not been seen in circulation for many decades. Today, all Indian Head Cents are collectors items and some command hundreds of dollars. For example, an 1877 Indian Head Cent graded in Good condition is worth $950!

Order Today: Supply Is Limited!
The number of U.S. Indian Head Cents in this Vault Release are limited so call today to reserve yours. These authentic coins are rich with American history. They make a wonderful addition to any collection and make a unique gift that will be increasingly valued in years to come by friends and family alike.

NOTICE: Due to demand and changing values of vintage U.S. coins this advertised price cannot be guaranteed and is subject to change without notice. Please call immediately to reserve your Banker Roll at current prices.

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Dinner from the Gulf

BY KEVIN HARGIS

As a kid, I used to take seafood for granted. Growing up less than 20 miles from the Gulf Coast gave me plenty of opportunities to eat delicious shrimp, crab, fish and oysters that came right off the boat. I also learned firsthand what it took to catch, clean and cook food from the briny depths. Some days, instead of buying seafood at the store, we would head down to the beach to collect our own.

There were early morning fishing trips with my dad. We would get up before dawn and head to the granite jetties marking the mouth of the Freeport Harbor Channel. There, we would toss our lines in the water, hoping for flounder, speckled trout or, if we were really lucky, a redfish or two. I never had much luck myself, tallying more lost tackle than fish, but when the fish were biting, we'd have a delicious fresh supper.

The canals and marshes near the beach were another hunting ground. Armed with stakes, string and cheap chicken parts, my mom, sister and I would try to catch blue crabs. Meanwhile, my dad would go after shrimp with his cast net. Successful crabbing took a little finesse. We'd shove a stake into the mud, tie a string to it and secure a piece of chicken to the other end. Then we'd toss the chicken into the water and wait. After a few minutes, we'd ever so gently reel in the string. Feeding crabs would follow the meat into shallow water, where it was simple to net them.

Not so simple was untangling the crabs from the net and putting them in a big plastic bucket. If we dropped one, it would quickly scuttle back toward the water, pincers held high and ready to snap little fingers. But even the ones that got away sometimes were swept up again minutes later.

While we filled our buckets, Dad would stand nearby and with an easy, practiced toss spin the cast net into deeper water, hauling up shrimp, which we kept, and other curious critters, such as croaker fish, which he'd toss back.

Back home after a long, sun-baked morning, we'd clean our catch. Mom would put a huge pot of water on to boil and before long, the crabs were cooked, and we'd feast on sweet claw meat, or she'd make stuffed crab in the shell.

The shrimp either went in the freezer or were immediately boiled or fried. Crunchy, and sweet, fried shrimp are a wonderful treat—and not a staple for those watching their waistlines.

Cleaning and deveining shrimp is a bit of a chore, but so worth it. You should also peel and devein the shrimp for this creamy soup, which pits the sweetness of corn and shrimp against the spiciness of red pepper and green chile. Thanks to Katherine Bevins, wife of our sales director, Martin, for sharing the recipe.

**SHRIMP AND CORN BISQUE**

\[
\text{1/4 cup butter} \\
\text{2 onions, diced} \\
\text{2-3 cloves garlic, minced} \\
\text{1 green bell pepper, diced} \\
\text{1 1/2 pounds small shrimp (peeled and deveined)} \\
\text{1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese} \\
\text{1 can (14.5 ounces) tomatoes and green chiles} \\
\text{2 cans (14 ounces) cream-style corn} \\
\text{1 tablespoon minced fresh basil or 1 teaspoon dried basil} \\
\text{3 cups milk} \\
\text{1 teaspoon black pepper} \\
\text{1/2 teaspoon red pepper, or more to taste} \\
\text{Salt to taste} \\
\text{1/2 bunch green onions, chopped} \\
\]

Melt butter in saucepan over medium heat. Sauté onion, garlic and bell pepper until onions begin to turn translucent, about 5 minutes. Add shrimp and cook until pink, about another 5 minutes. Add cream cheese and stir until melted. Add corn, tomatoes, basil, milk and black pepper. Turn down heat and simmer 10 minutes. Taste, add salt and adjust spices. Add green onions and serve.

Serving size: 1 cup. Per serving: 406 calories, 25.5 g protein, 21.6 g fat, 10 g fiber, 42.1 g carbohydrates, 714 mg sodium, 184 mg cholesterol

PHOTO BY RICK PATRICK

PHOTO BY KEVIN HARGIS

TEXAS CO-OP POWER October 2009
When the call went out for recipes featuring shrimp and oysters, we received a boatful of responses, most of them featuring shrimp. Oysters, being somewhat more of an acquired taste for many, were not as well represented, but we did get some good recipes featuring the mollusks. The best of the bunch according to our taste testers was a tortilla soup with shrimp, adding a decidedly Gulf Coast twist.

**OYSTERS FLORENTINE**

1,815 mg sodium, 129 mg cholesterol, 10.4 g fat, 62.8 g carbohydrates, 7.4 g fiber, Serving size: 1 cup. Per serving: 474 calories, 25.7 g protein, 0.2 g fiber, 5.7 g carbohydrates, 1 g fiber, 210 mg sodium, 56 mg cholesterol.

**SHRIMP TORTILLA SOUP**

1% pounds medium shrimp
1% tablespoons paprika
1 teaspoon cayenne pepper
1% teaspoons white pepper
1% teaspoons ground oregano
1 tablespoon salt (or to taste)
2 tablespoons garlic powder
1% teaspoons sugar
12 corn tortillas
2 cups peanut oil
1 large bunch scallions, finely chopped
2% cups chopped onion
1 cup chopped cilantro
2-3 finely chopped jalapeños
6 cups chopped tomatoes
3 cups tomato juice
1 pound Monterey jack cheese, shredded
3 avocados, diced

Peel and devein shrimp and set aside. In small bowl, combine paprika, cayenne, white pepper, oregano, salt, garlic powder and sugar. Set aside. Cut tortillas into ½-inch strips. In a 4-qt Dutch oven or heavy pot, heat oil to just below boiling. Fry strips in two batches until golden brown; drain well. Allow oil to cool, then remove all but ¾ cup of oil. Return pot to heat; add scallions, onion, cilantro and jalapeño and sauté until the onion is just transparent. Stir in tomatoes and reserved spice mix and simmer about 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add tomato juice and three cups of water and simmer another 10 minutes. Add shrimp and cook five more minutes or until shrimp are pink and done. To serve, place a layer of tortilla strips in bottom of soup bowls. Ladle in soup, then top with shredded cheese and avocado.

Serving size: 1 cup. Per serving: 474 calories, 25.7 g protein, 0.2 g fiber, 5.7 g carbohydrates, 1 g fiber, 210 mg sodium, 56 mg cholesterol.

**OYSTERS FLORENTINE**

1 stick (8 tablespoons) butter, softened
2 teaspoons onion juice
1% teaspoon seasoned salt
1% teaspoon cayenne pepper
1% cup seasoned bread crumbs
1% pound fresh spinach, stems removed or 1 package (10 ounces) frozen spinach, thawed
12 large oysters
Rock salt

Combine butter, onion juice, seasoned salt, pepper and bread crumbs; mix until well blended. Set aside. If using fresh spinach, cook and drain thoroughly. Coarsely chop spinach. Distribute spinach equally among six scallop shells sold for baking purposes (or use individual ramekins): Cover surface of baking sheet with rock salt. Place shells atop salt. Put two oysters on each shell. Top oysters with butter mixture, dividing it equally among shells. Preheat broiler on high. Put pan under broiler until butter melts and oysters are slightly brown around edges. Serve immediately.

Serving size: 1 shell. Per serving: 181 calories, 2.8 g protein, 0.2 g fiber, 0.7 g carbohydrates, 1 g fiber, 220 mg sodium, 65 mg cholesterol.

**SHRIMP LOUISIANE**

2 slices white bread, cubed
1% cup milk
1 cup chopped onion
1 cup chopped bell pepper
1 cup sliced mushrooms
1 clove garlic, minced
2 tablespoons butter
2 pounds shrimp
1 can (10.5 ounces) cream of mushroom soup
3 cups cooked rice
1 tablespoon chopped parsley
1% tablespoons fresh lemon juice
1% teaspoons salt
1% teaspoons black pepper
1% teaspoons cayenne pepper
Paprika

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Soak bread cubes in milk. In large saucepan, sauté onion, bell pepper, mushrooms and garlic in butter until crisp-tender. Add

**THE LOWDOWN ON SHRIMP**

It’s an old rule of thumb that if you’re going to eat raw Gulf oysters, you should only do so in months ending in “R” (September-December). The reasons for this are twofold: Oysters spawn in warmer weather, spoiling their flavor for raw consumption. In addition, a bacterium called Vibrio vulnificus occurs naturally in warm Gulf waters and can cause severe illness or even death, even in healthy individuals, according to the Texas Department of State Health Services. Any time of year, you should know that eating raw shellfish is risky, especially for those with weakened immune systems. Cooking oysters is the safest way to go.

**OYSTERS: ONLY IN ‘R’ MONTHS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Oyster Size</th>
<th>Count in a Pound</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jumbo</td>
<td>10 or fewer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extra Large/Large</td>
<td>10-20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>31-35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small</td>
<td>35-45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Best for**

- Shrimp cocktails, grilling
- Grilling, boiling, frying
- Boiling, frying
- Boiling, stir-frying, sauce dishes
- Soups, pasta toppings, sandwiches

**BUYING TIPS**

- Look for shrimp with firm, uniformly translucent flesh.
- Take a whiff. If you smell an ammonia odor instead of the ocean, the shrimp are likely past their prime.
- You’ll likely not find fresh, never-frozen shrimp away from the seashore.
- Watch the labels to differentiate between farmed and wild-caught.
shrimp and cook 3 minutes longer or until shrimp is pink. Stir in soup, rice, parsley, lemon juice and seasonings. Add soaked bread and mix well. Spoon into buttered, shallow 2-quart casserole; sprinkle with paprika. Bake for 30-45 minutes. Serves 6.

Serving size: 1 cup. Per serving: 270 calories, 34.9 g protein, 6.5 g fat, 34.2 g carbohydrates, 1.8 g fiber, 1,014 mg sodium, 241 mg cholesterol

JOYCE MOORE
Grayson-Collin Electric Cooperative

SPICY SHRIMP AND RICE

2 pounds shrimp
1/2 cup ketchup
1/4 cup soy sauce
2 tablespoons sherry
1 teaspoon red pepper
2 tablespoons grated ginger
1 teaspoon sugar
1/4 teaspoon salt
2 bell peppers, seeded
2 tablespoons cooking oil
6 ounces snow pea pods, fresh or frozen
Hot cooked rice to serve

Boil and peel shrimp. Set aside. Combine ketchup, soy sauce, sherry, red pepper, ginger, sugar and salt in small bowl and mix well. Slice bell pepper into 1-inch strips. Heat oil in large skillet over medium-high heat and stir-fry bell pepper for 1 minute; add green onions, garlic and snow peas and cook another minute. Add shrimp and ketchup mixture. Stir and continue to cook until all is thoroughly heated. Serve over rice.

Serving size: 1 cup. Per serving: 261 calories, 36.6 g protein, 6.6 g fat, 14.5 g carbohydrates, 2.5 g fiber, 1,179 mg sodium, 229 mg cholesterol

JOANA AGERTON
Big Country Electric Cooperative

RECIPE CONTEST

February’s recipe contest topic is Filling the Breadbox. Bread is the staff of life, the old saying goes. Do you have a recipe for a favorite loaf that doesn’t involve a bread machine? The deadline is October 10.

Send recipes to Home Cooking, 1122 Colorado, 24th Floor, Austin, TX 78701. You may also fax them to (512) 763-3408, e-mail them to recipes@texascooppower.com, or submit online at www.texascooppower.com. Please include your name, address and phone number, as well as the name of your electric co-op. The top winner will receive a copy of 60 Years of Home Cooking and a Texas-shaped trivet. Runners-up will also receive a prize.

Past recipes are available in the Recipes Archive at www.texascooppower.com.

SWEET POTATO PIE WITH PECAN CRUNCH TOPPING

4 cups cooked, mashed sweet potatoes
1/4 cup butter or margarine, softened
4 eggs
2 cups granulated sugar
2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon salt
1 cup buttermilk
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
1 tablespoon vanilla
1 unbaked 9-inch pastry shells

Combine sweet potatoes, butter and eggs, mixing well. In separate bowl, combine sugar, flour and salt; then stir into sweet potato mixture. Mix buttermilk and baking soda, add to potato-sugar mixture and blend well. Stir in vanilla. Divide filling evenly between pastry shells. Bake at 350 degrees for 60 to 70 minutes or until set. Spoon Pecan Crunch Topping evenly over pies and broil 5 to 7 inches from heat about 2 minutes or until topping is golden and sugar is dissolved.

PECAN CRUNCH TOPPING

1/4 cup butter or margarine
2 cups chopped pecans
1 cup brown sugar

Heat butter in saucepan over low heat until melted. Remove from heat and stir in pecans and brown sugar. Heat butter in saucepan over low heat until melted. Remove from heat and stir in pecans and brown sugar.

Recipe from the Texas Co-op Power cookbook 60 Years of Home Cooking

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I’ve traveled paths you’ve yet to walk

And each new leaf is a new start

I’m blessed to share with you

Let kindness spread like sunshine

Embrace those who are sad

Respect their dignity, give them joy

Forgive those who might hurt you

And though you have your pride

Listen closely to their viewpoint

Try to see the other side

Walk softly when you’re angry

Try not to take offense

invoke your sense of humor

Laughing’s power is immense!

Express what you are feeling

Your beliefs you should uphold

Don’t be away from what is right

Be courageous and be bold

Keep hope right in your pocket

It will guide you day to day

Take it out when it is needed

When it’s near, you’ll find a way

Remember friends and family

Of which you are a precious part

Love deeply and love truly

Be kind to all that you meet

And let it shine from your heart

The world is far from perfect

But you still can make a difference

By how you live your life

And so I’m very blessed to know

The wonders you will do

Because you are my granddaughter

And I believe in you

Grandma’s Pearls of Wisdom poem

By Becky Netherland

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Move over, Annie Oakley! Texas boasts cowgirls from way up yonder to down below. Y’all forked over such a heap of wonderful pictures depicting cowgirls of yesterday, today and tomorrow that many treasures got left up the spout after deciding on our finalists. Thanks for showing us how the West really was won.

—ASHLEY CLARY

A hot July afternoon found cowgirls Laura Trcka, Donna Egenolf and Kathy Mostofi, all Pedernales Electric Cooperative members, cooling off in the windmill trough after a horseback ride. Thanks to Kathy for sending in this “cool” shot.

Sisters Bijou, Bliss and Bianca Taylor, ages 16, 7 and 12, share not only the close bond of sisterhood, but also of being cowgirls. Dad Jeff Taylor of Culver Electric sent us this family photo.

Three-year-old Gracie Clemons barrels out of the gate during her first rodeo event, mutton bustin’, at the Georgetown Rodeo. This brave little lass is the daughter of Pedernales Electric Cooperative members Rebecca and Bryan Clemons.

Upcoming in Focus on Texas

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ROUGHIN’ IT is the topic for our DECEMBER 2009 issue. Send your photo—along with your name, address, phone number, a short description of what you’re roughin’ it on Texas—touched up if necessary—to Roughin’ It, Focus on Texas, 1122 Colorado St. 24th Floor, Austin, TX 78701, before October 10. A stamped, self-addressed envelope must be included if you want your entry returned (approximately six weeks). Please do not submit irreplaceable photographs—send a copy or duplicate. We regret that Texas Co-op Power cannot be responsible for photos that are lost in the mail or not received by the deadline. Please note that we cannot provide individual critiques of submitted photos. If you use a digital camera, e-mail your highest-resolution images to focus@texascooppower.com, or submit them on our website at www.texascooppower.com.
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03
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10
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17
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The sense of smell is a powerful memory trigger: The smell of earth can lead us back to the farm, where Dad and Granddad worked long hours in the cornfields. The smell of Pond's Cold Cream on Mom's skin may take us back to those special hugs that only she could give when we fell. And the smell of freshly cut grass might hearken back to those summer days of childhood spent playing football or baseball in the dewy fields behind the school.

In North-Central Texas, just south of the Oklahoma border, the 14-mile trek from Nocona to Saint Jo on U.S. Highway 82 delivers the musky scent of leather, taking you to other socked-away memories—whether it's saddling up your steed to herd cattle or taking a long, scenic drive in that old car with those wonderfully worn leather seats.

NOCONA

Just east of Wichita Falls, you'll find the town of Nocona, named for Comanche Chief Peta Nocona. Here, the smell of leather greets you as soon as you reach downtown where the NOCONA ATHLETIC GOODS COMPANY, which started making baseball gloves in 1934, is the last mass-production company in America still doing so. Other glove-making companies have long since outsourced their factory work overseas.

Visitors can tour the facilities at set times Monday through Thursday (although staff members will try to accommodate visitors or small groups at any time) and see gloves made from start to finish. See the leather arrive fresh from the tannery, cut into the proper shapes, sewn, stitched, cut again for the inside padding, laced, pounded into shape and softened with oils. When done, browse the facility's museum and see rare, signed memorabilia and replicas of gloves used by some of the most famous men to play the game, such as Babe Ruth. The exhibit includes a replica of Nolan Ryan's first glove, a Nocona.

While downtown, stop at TIMES FORGOTTEN STEAK HOUSE, a restaurant and club open Wednesday through Sunday lunch. The Western-themed establishment has antlers and saddles on the walls, wrought-iron railings and lots of menu choices, including Texas staples such as delicious burgers, chicken-fried steak and barbecue. And for a tuition, which includes everything except room and board, you can attend one of C.T. Chappell's bootmaking classes. The two-week class includes everything you need—from glue to thread to your choice of leather—to make your very own pair of cowboy boots. Call for class schedules.

If there's time to kill, turn south onto FM 677 off U.S. 82. After about a mile and a half you'll find the locally named "Sculpture Yard" in a field of the HEN RANCH. There are several pieces of eye candy to gaze upon: Anchored wooden poles standing on end at different angles form a 20-foot-tall fan, and five red and rusty Volkswagen Beetles are lined up as if caravaning to an unknown destination.

There are cute little antique stores to visit on the town square, such as the aptly named GRANDMAMA'S STUFF but be sure to stop in at TRAIL TOWN CUSTOM LEATHER, where everything is custom-made. Leather products include boots, chaps, belts, gun holsters and knife sheaves, and for a tuition, which includes everything except room and board, you can attend one of C.T. Chappell's bootmaking classes. The two-week class includes everything you need—from glue to thread to your choice of leather—to make your very own pair of cowboy boots. Call for class schedules.

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